

**CLAIMS**

1. Method for diagnosing malfunctions of apparatus delivering goods or services against payment, of the automatic terminal (1) type, which method is characterized  
5 in that it consists in calculating the value of at least one data item representative of the operation of said apparatus (1), comparing said calculated value to a predetermined reference value, and deducing the occurrence  
10 of a malfunction in the event of a predetermined difference between said values.

2. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said data item representative of the operation of said apparatus (1) is representative of the frequency of payments made at said apparatus (1).

15 3. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said data item representative of the operation of said apparatus (1) is the time that has elapsed since the last payment made to said apparatus (1).

20 4. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said data item representative of the operation of said apparatus (1) is the time that has elapsed since the last payment made via said apparatus (1) for each of the payment means accepted by said apparatus (1).

25 5. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said reference value is representative of the average of values taken by said data item representative of the operation of the apparatus (1).

30 6. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said reference value depends at least on a parameter such as the time of day or the apparatus (1) concerned.

7. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said predetermined difference depends at least on a parameter such as the time of day or the apparatus (1) concerned.

35 8. Method according to claim 1, characterized in

that the operations of calculating a data item representative of the operation of said apparatus (1) and comparing the calculated value and a predetermined reference value are effected directly by said apparatus (1).

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9. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that the operations of calculating a data item representative of the operation of said apparatus (1) and comparing the calculated value and a predetermined reference value are partly or completely effected by a server (5) adapted to communicate with said apparatus (1).  
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10. Method according to claim 1, characterized in that said apparatus is a terminal for paying for parking spaces, such as a parking voucher dispenser or a parking meter.  
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